

Site C Project

Staying safe around the new reservoir

NOVEMBER 2023

When BC Hydro begins to fill the reservoir in late summer / early fall 2024, there will be new hazards on the water. These water hazards will be present during reservoir filling and for the first year afterwards as the surrounding land continues to stabilize.

During reservoir filling, we ask the public to be extremely cautious around the reservoir as we monitor for safety and slope stability.

The existing boat launch at Halfway River will re-open at the start of the boating season in spring 2024. It will remain open until we begin reservoir filling in late summer / early fall 2024.

All public boat launches on the reservoir will be closed during reservoir filling and for at least one year after.

Hazards on the water



Strong currents

Closer to the dam, there will be strong currents near the approach channel as water is drawn into the underwater intakes of the powerhouse. The approach channel debris boom will prevent boaters from getting too close to the dam.

Boaters are strongly urged to obey all signage, and stay off the reservoir during filling and for at least one year after.



Submerged hazards

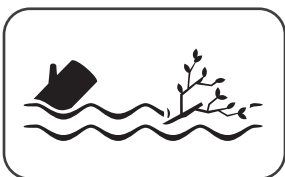
During reservoir filling, submerged hazards could be dangerous for boaters as water levels rise. These include causeways, boulders, riprap, and concrete or steel structures. Once the reservoir reaches its full depth these objects will be fully submerged and no longer present a hazard.

After reservoir filling, other submerged hazards remain along the shoreline, such as shallow-water fish habitat which takes the form of logs and boulder piles. These hazards will be identified with boater warning signage.



Waves

There may be waves on the reservoir caused by wind or slope instabilities, as sections of shoreline settle into the reservoir during the filling process. The resulting waves could run up against the opposite shore. Hazards will be greatest during high flows and extreme weather.



Floating woody debris

During reservoir filling, woody debris will float to the surface. The debris includes logs, saplings, bushes, and plants. It may also include vegetation that could not be safely removed during clearing. Over time, the debris will float downstream, to be caught and removed by a debris boom.

Hazards on land

Hazards on land will be most common during reservoir filling and the following year, while the land and shoreline stabilizes. This is why all public recreation areas will be closed during this time, and we ask you to use extreme caution when close to shore, particularly when near steep slopes.



Unstable shoreline and erosion

There will be erosion and slope instability, with impacts varying in different locations.

Steep embankments and slopes are particularly prone to sudden slides, which may trigger waves on the reservoir. After the reservoir is filled, erosion will speed up in some areas, and new slides may occur.

Erosion is more likely to occur after high wind and rainstorms. Please use caution when near the reservoir, look for signs of active erosion and slope movements, and maintain a safe distance from these areas.

Monitoring

BC Hydro has developed an extensive program to monitor and assess the reservoir shoreline and slopes. This program will take place throughout reservoir filling and in the following years.

There are many ways of monitoring slope stability and shoreline erosion:

- Ground inspections of slopes, using instruments and visual surveys
- Periodic and area-specific aerial inspections
- Annual aerial surveys before the start of boating season
- Satellite monitoring to measure slope displacements in near real time

BC Hydro's geotechnical engineers will interpret all the monitoring data to assess shoreline stability and determine when the reservoir is safe for public use. We will use the findings from the monitors to identify changes that point to slope movement.



How to stay safe when reservoir filling begins

1. Stay off the water and away from the reservoir until it is deemed safe
2. Obey all signage
3. Visit sitecproject.com/reservoir for the latest conditions

911 operators respond to all type of emergencies, including those on the water. Emergency responders will coordinate with BC Hydro, if needed.

In the unlikely event there is an emergency at the Site C dam, BC Hydro will immediately notify Indigenous Nations, as well as all appropriate municipal and regional governments. From there, each local government will notify their communities.

For continued updates, check your local government's website or local media. We will also post updates on BCHydro.com and our social media channels.

Emergency Response

Call 911 if you see someone in danger on the reservoir.